



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
EDUCATION ACTIVITY
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MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEPENDENTS EDUCATION COUNCIL MEMBERS

SUBJECT: DEC Meeting Minutes, November 7, 2005

On November 7, 2005, the Dependents Education Council (DEC) met at the Webb Building at 4040 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA. The meeting was hosted and chaired by Dr. Joseph D. Tafoya, Director, Department of Defense Education Activity and Executive Secretary, DEC.

A listing of attendees is attached.

DEC MEETING OVERVIEW:

Dr. Tafoya provided opening comments, and provided the members information on the personnel transition within the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense and Personnel and Readiness and the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense, Military Community and Family Policy. Following these introductions, he asked the DEC members to introduce themselves.

Dr. Tafoya then reviewed the agenda items to be presented and asked for corrections or changes to the June 22, 2005, DEC Minutes. The minutes were approved as presented.

There were no changes or corrections offered to the June 22, 2005, DEC Minutes.

The meeting proceeded with discussions and briefings of previous DEC issues.

These included:

INFORMATIONAL BRIEFINGS:

DoDEA Testing Analyses

Dr. Tafoya briefed the staff on the DoDEA Testing Analyses and how those results are used within the schools. He presented the most recent Terra Nova results. Terra Nova is a national standardized test which our students take every year. Dr. Tafoya explained that the Terra Nova scores give a general indicator of how well the system is doing, but that a deeper analysis is required to determine how the students are

progressing. He then described the Cohort Study which has been conducted over the last 5 years and compares students with 3 consecutive years of test scores in DoDEA to other students in the system

The study reveals that the students in the Cohort Group outperformed the students that were not in the Cohort Group. The Cohort study also revealed that all categories of students (Elementary, Middle, and High School) showed increased performance and the gaps between the White students and the minority students have narrowed.

One of the limitations of the Cohort study information is that it only goes to the Area level due to the number of students that remain in the DoD schools beyond 3 years. In order to have enough kids at each grade level and subject level, we are unable to take it down to the school level. When we try to gather this info at the district level, the amount of available data is extremely small that is impossible to make definitive discussions regarding this. Therefore, we have to look at other tools. Dr. Tafoya then discussed additional tools used to gage performance. He explained that at the high school level tools such as Algebra End of Course Exams, Advancement Placement, SAT, U.S. History End of Course Exam, and PSAT are examined. DoDEA also has additional End of Course Exams currently under development that will help provide information on student performance over time. This data will be used to compare our students with students in other counties and states.

Dr. Tafoya is in the process of meeting with DoDEA school principals to share test data, emphasize the need to organize and assemble data, and with district superintendents to provide district Terra Nova data on reading and math, and the analysis performed at each school. He stated that critical questions are being asked of the superintendents based on patterns revealed in the data.

Based on questions during the discussion that followed, Dr. Tafoya informed the group that the scores Terra Nova, as well as the Cohort data are on the DoDEA web site. He will provide briefing at the June DEC meeting on the results of his discussions with the superintendents.

(Item Open)

Summer School

Dr. Elizabeth Middlemiss provided an update on the DoDEA Summer School Program. During this year, DoDEA offered a 4 week enrichment program for Kindergarten-8th using the Voyager series (reading, math, and science). The program was conducted at 70 sites world-wide with 7,483 students participating compared to 542 students last year. Dr. Middlemiss reported that improved attendance, improved test scores and teacher surveys and anecdotal data were evidence of success for this program.

Remedial courses were funded for 280 students in high school with the concentration on English, Math, Social Studies, and Science. The withdrawal rate was down to 7% compared to 47% last year. The pass rate was 70% overall.

Last year DoDEA received \$3 million from OSD to conduct this pilot summer school program, with the understanding that future year programs would be funded from within DoDEA's budget. Dr. Middlemiss recommended that DoDEA provide K-8 summer school courses with an estimated cost of \$3.8 million, recognizing that funding for the program in out years could present a challenge.

Discussion centered on the cost of continuing to provide a summer school program and where the funds would come from. Members expressed their desire for continued summer school. Dr. Tafoya offered that other initiatives would have to be reduced to make up the shortfall.

(Item Open)

Foreign Language

Dr. Middlemiss discussed the development of a tentative 7-year Initiative in Foreign Language, and presented the group with the current status of students taking foreign languages in DoDEA. It is DoDEA's goal to elevate the Foreign Language Program from an elective type program to an academic subject that would be a part of the program for all students. Currently there are varied Host Nation offerings in DoDDS and the programs are teacher specific and not DoDEA wide.

The two strategic languages are Arabic and Chinese Mandarin. Currently, Arabic is only offered in the schools in Bahrain, and Chinese Mandarin is not offered at all. As part of the 7-year initiative, DoDEA hopes to have a significant increase in the number of students enrolled in AP Foreign Language Courses with a comprehensive K-12 program, promoting high levels of proficiency, utilizing existing staff wherever possible. Dr. Middlemiss went on to say that technology and distance learning would be utilized to ensure consistent program delivery.

Following Dr. Middlemiss's briefing, there was extended discussion regarding the Foreign Language Initiative, including a wide range of discussion pertaining to what would be considered a strategic language and the impact on other languages. Questions arose concerning the reason for a large disparity between the number of DoDDS-E and DoDDS-P students taking AP language courses. Dr. Bresell explained that many of the DoDDS-P students are taking Korean and Japanese, but there are no AP courses available for those languages. Additional topics, such as the need to encourage more students to

take languages, to start an earlier age, and to continue education in language for a longer amount of time.

(Item Open)

Customer Satisfaction Survey

Dr. Janet Rope, System Accountability and Research Administrator presented the actions underway based on the results of the 2004-05 DoDEA Customer Satisfaction Survey. This survey, designed to poll the opinions of all DoDEA parents, DoDEA students in grades 4-12, and all DoDEA teachers is conducted every other year.

Dr. Rope discussed the additional questions that DoDEA is asking based on the survey results on counseling services. DoDEA will monitor counseling services by sampling all schools and identifying sites to target. A counseling action plan will be developed and then implemented where necessary.

(Item Open)

Accreditation of Schools

Dr. Rope described the NCA CASI school accreditation process and actions that are taken as a result of the reports generated. She explained the categories of Accredited without Warning, Accredited with Warning, and Not Accredited. DoDEA has no schools in the Not Accredited category and only 2 schools were in the Accredited with Warning category.

(Item Open)

Budget Update. Ms. Irma Finocchiaro, Associate Director for Financial and Business Operations, provided a briefing on the FY 2006 budget. The issues discussed included demographics, trends, educational initiatives, Characteristics of DoDEA's Budget, FY 2005-Challenges, FY 2006 Program, Congressional/OSD Adjustments, FY 2007 – Preview, and the next steps.

Currently there are 221 DoDDS and DDESS schools with an enrollment of 91,696. During the last few years, the enrollment has declined both within DoDDS and DDESS while funding has increased, causing a notable increase in per student cost.

The increase in funding has been utilized to pay for several educational initiatives, including Antiterrorism/Force Protection, funding for counselors and psychologists that help the students cope with their parents extended deployments. Additionally, funding has been provided for Full Day Kindergarten (implementation of this program should be

complete within DoDDS during FY 2006), T1 Lines, High School Programs, Accountability and Assessments, Special Education Program, Military Restationing and Facilities Sustainment and Military Construction Programs .

Ms. Finocchiaro emphasized that 97% of DoDEA's budget includes fixed costs. The remaining funds are used for facility repair and maintenance, equipment repair and maintenance, travel, and miscellaneous services, supplies and equipment.

Major challenges during FY 2005 included Living Quarters/Post Allowances seriously impacted due to the weakness of the dollar in overseas locations, funding for summer school (DoDEA received an extra \$3M from OSD), and reduction in sustainment, restoration, and modernization funds. Due to funding reductions and internal challenges the program was reduced approximately \$64M to a total of \$34.2M. Working with OSD, DoDEA was able to get some end of year funding bringing the total funding back to \$57.9M.

The FY 2006 budget is poised to fund 13,616 Full time Equivalents, 95% (\$83.33M) of OSD sustainment requirement of (\$87.72M), summer school program, and curriculum buys for health, physical education, English as a second Language, and K-12 technology.

The FY 2006 Congressional reductions and funding shortfall of \$62.7 million created by the foreign currency fluctuations in the living quarters and post allowances overseas. Through realignment of internal DoDEA resources and support from OSD, all of the \$62.7 million was restored.

Ms. Finocchiaro advised the group that the School Year 2004-05 demographics as of September 30, 2004, indicate the number of students has declined by about 2,000 in the Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS) and 2,000 in the Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools (DDESS).

She went on to state that DoDEA was advised that Congressional reductions and OSD adjustments for this fiscal year which would amount to approximately \$66 million. She described the proposed method for distributing the cuts without affecting the educational programs at the classroom level, but went on to explain that DoDEA has been successful in the past in working with OSD to restore a large amount of funding to cover the reductions after the mid-year review with OSD or at year-end. A discussion occurred regarding the difficulty of applying any restoration of funding to school programs so late in the academic year.

DoDEA has requested additional funding to support the increased enrollment in DDESS schools at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, and Ft. Stewart, Georgia, as a result of the Army's Residential Communities Initiative. Ms. Finocchiaro advised that a total of \$127.5 million has been requested to cover the Army's RCI. The funding is based on the

following: \$87.2M Operational & Maintenance funding requested from OSD, \$1.3M procurement funding requested from OSD, and \$39M MILCON programmed funding from the Department of the Army. This funding is required to provide teachers, supplies and facilities to accommodate the anticipated growth

Military Construction Prioritization Process. Ms. Irma Finocchiaro described the process used for military construction prioritization. She explained that prior to instituting a formal method for this process that there was minimal stakeholder involvement, and subjective criteria was used. The current approach includes military participation at all levels, objective criteria has been established, weighted scores jointly agreed upon, and area priorities are taken into consideration. The two-step process first identifies the most urgent requirements to resolve safety, security and educational deficiencies at military installations with long-term viability and then matches the prioritized list with available funding in each out year.

Ms. Finocchiaro presented the list of established weighting criteria, and stated that other than safety and security issues, no single criteria element in education facility planning drives the project urgency. All elements must be considered and calculated.

In describing the 2005 Prioritization Board Results, Ms. Finocchiaro reported that the Board agreed to keep the same program as submitted in the FY 2006-2007 Biennial President's Budget. A weighted score was developed for each school in DoDEA using the methods used by the Army Corps of Engineers in the DDESS study.

The major challenge was limited funds and two projects (Irwin MS and Pope ES) were shifted to out year fiscal year programs. Lower priority projects were not considered for voting purposes.

Ms. Finocchiaro requested that the DEC members endorse the current DoDEA MILCON Prioritization Process.

(Item Open)

Military Construction

The FY 2006 MILCON program was briefed by Ms. Finocchiaro. She described the program and the scope of the projects within each DoDEA area, for a total of \$100.467 M.

(Item Open)

Non-DoD School Program in English Speaking Countries

Mr. Michael Lynch, Chief of Staff, DoDEA, provided an update on the Non-DoD School Program for eligible dependents of DoD sponsors, assigned to an overseas area where a DoDDS school is not available within a commuting distance. He described the general operating guidance and the authorities and governing regulations of the program.

Mr. Lynch told the group that, based on discussions and decisions in previous at DEC meetings, an exception for DoD Personnel assigned to Department of State and Exchange Officers follow Department of State Eligibility Guidelines rather than DoD guidelines. Further he explained to the group that a directive type member was being cancelled and replaced by the creation of a DoDEA Non-DoD School Program Regulation.

Under the pending Non-DoD School Priority, parents may independently elect to home school, with no reimbursement, at any point in time. He went on to explain the specific priority structure for each of the school levels.

Discussion followed with questions about specific locations and situations. More discussion was held regarding the exception for exchange officers and military assigned to the Department of State. A motion was made to eliminate the exception resulting in 8 members voting for elimination, 7 members opposing, and 2 abstaining. Dr. Tafoya will take this issue up with senior leadership.

(Item Open)

London Dorm Review

Mr. Lynch provided a brief update on the Working Group established to review the London Dorm. This group will make recommendations to the DEC at the June 2006 meeting.

(Item Open)

Defense Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary (DDESS) Transfer Study Update

Dr. Tafoya provided the current status of the DDESS Transfer study.

(Item Open)

Army Education Summit

Ms. P.K. Tomlinson, Deputy Director, Child and Youth Services, HQ Department of the Army provided an informational briefing on Army School Transition Plan designed to

outline the strategy and timeline for school transition affected by modular force movements, IGPBS, and BRAC. She detailed the top associated issues that these changes bring. She described the Army strategies for enabling quality school transition opportunities for the children, as well as the memorandum of agreement of guiding principles signed by 184 school districts as of October 2005.

Ms. Tomlinson discussed the outcomes of the 2005 Army Education Summit and local community strategies.

DoDDS-E Transformation Brief

Ms. Diana Ohman, Director, DoDDS Europe presented the potential end state organization after the conclusion of transformation in Europe, based on current information.

(Item Open)

DoDDS-P Transformation Brief

Dr. Nancy Bressell, Director, DoDDS Pacific and DDESS Guam discussed the current understanding of troop movements in the Pacific. Based on predictions, MILCON funds may be needed to accommodate additional students in one area. In others it appears that the military footprint may be changed across the area.

(Item Open)

DDESS Transformation brief

Dr. Elaine Beraza, Director, DDESS and DoDDS Cuba provided a brief on factors that would affect change in her area. Residential Community Initiative, BRAC and restationing all bring changes to student enrollment.

(Item Open)

APF/NAF Update

Mr. Michael Lynch fielded questions and comments regarding the status of the proposed legislative change for eligibility to enroll AF/NAF dependents in DoDDS. He reported that the Conference report and resolution of the differences in language and final authorization is expected to be completed within 2 weeks as part of the 2006 Defense Authorization Act.

(Item Open)

Contractor Eligibility

Mr. Lynch updated the group on the status of enrollment category for dependents of contractor personnel. OSD General Counsel has ruled that a legislative change is not required, so following the passage of the APF/NAF legislative change, a directive memorandum will establish space-required, tuition-paying status for contractor dependents.

(Item Open)

Contractor Waiver

MG David P. Valcourt, Army Europe presented a proposal that does not wish for the APF/NAF change to be tied to the contractor waiver. This was discussed and agreed that it should remain connected to the timing of the AF/NAF change.

(Item Closed)

Reserves Eligibility

An information paper update was provided on the status of enrollment eligibility in DoDDS for the minor dependents of Reservists called to active duty. A waiver to address this issue is currently under DoD General Counsel review.

(Item Open)

Reservists Waiver

MG David P. Valcourt, US Army, Europe prepared a paper requesting that waiver approval for reservists be expedited.

SHAPE Eligibility: A legislative change was inserted into the Fiscal Year 2007 ULB Process. The change was supported by the majority of the Services and has cleared the OSD General Counsel and is at OMB for review. We should know within the next month if it will be submitted to the Hill.

(Item Open)

Partnership for Peace (PfP): Mr. Mike Lynch Briefed the PfP. The recent ULB prepared for PfP was not totally supported by all the Services, and was in the legislative cycle. It is scheduled to go back to the ULB process in the spring. He answered that and NATO would prefer to have this considered as a permanent waiver instead of going back to the ULB process.

(Item Open)

Reduce Kindergarten Pupil Teacher Ratio: Major General Larsen, Deputy Commander for U.S. Forces Japan expressed the desire of parents in the Pacific area to reduce the pupil to teacher ratio for kindergarten students. They are aware that the budget would have a significant impact on this issue, however, they believe that smaller class sizes may help to enhance student learning. This item will be briefed at the June DEC.

Open Item

Open discussions

Dr. Tafoya informed the DEC members of future meetings of the elementary and middle school task force to review issues and initiatives concerning these particular groups. The goal is to discuss the results at the June DEC.

He also informed them that a group of Administrators and Command and Parent Representatives recently met to discuss the goals of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP). The current CSP is scheduled to expire at the end of FY 2006. The plan is to "roll over" the current four goals and not to reinvent them at this time of change in DoDEA. The group did review the metrics, milestones, and milestones of the goals. The goals are challenging but realistic. The results and recommendations of the CSP review will be discussed at the June DEC.

Dr Tafoya reminded the members during this time of transition we will look at transformation, movement of troops, and budget issues. The bottom line is still a quality education program.

Dr. Tafoya thanked all the participants for attending and the meeting was adjourned.

Joseph D. Tafoya
Executive Secretary